

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
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CLIMATOGRAPHY OF THE UNITED STATES NO. 81- 38

DECENNIAL CENSUS OF UNITED STATES CLIMATE—
MONTHLY NORMALS OF TEMPERATURE,
PRECIPITATION, AND HEATING DEGREE DAYS



WASHINGTON, D. C.:1962

PREFACE

The climatological standard normals presented in this publication are based on records for the 30-year period 1931-1960 inclusive. For the first time, normals have been computed for substations and divisions using a base period identical to that used for first-order stations.

Previous normals were published in Weather Bureau Technical Paper No. 31, "Monthly Normal Temperatures, Precipitation, and Degree Days," and were based on records for the period 1921-1950. Earlier sets of normals are described in [1].

This is the first series of publications resulting from the project "The Decennial Census of United States Climate, 1960." The project is a continuation of earlier censuses of the climate of the United States that date back to the early 19th Century and are described in [2]. Future publications of this project will be listings of daily normals of temperature, and degree days; summaries of hourly observations; and listings of monthly divisional averages of temperature and precipitation.

Units used in this publication are degrees F. for temperatures, and inches for precipitation. The heating degree day normals are derived from the monthly normal temperatures, and are computed on the standard base of 65°F. Monthly normals of less than 5 degree days are shown as zero.

Standard Normals for Weather Bureau First Order Stations

A normal of a climatological element is an arithmetic mean for a specific period of record which estimates the true mean of the element at the current exposure of the meteorological instrument measuring the element. The true mean is the mean of all possible observations (population) at the current exposure. It is from this population that future observations will come, not from values in the past record. This is what makes it important to obtain an estimate of this mean. The true mean can never be known exactly but must be estimated from a sample of the past record ([3] p. 53 section 4.3). The normals presented here are estimates of the true mean obtained from the 30-year sample record 1931-1960. They are called standard normals because they conform to the World Meteorological Organization standard for climatological normals.

If no exposure changes have occurred at a station the normal is estimated by simply averaging the 30 values from the 1931-1960 record. Since it is next to impossible to maintain a multiple purpose network of meteorological stations without having exposure changes, it is first necessary to find and evaluate these changes and then make adjustments for them if necessary.

Heterogeneities in record due to exposure changes are found in two ways: by determining them from the station histories and by use of statistical tests. The statistical test when standardized for the purpose is easy to apply and will often find heterogeneities which are not defined by the station histories as well as those which have been so determined. Two statistical tests were employed: one for temperature and the other for precipitation. These are described in [4].

After the periods of heterogeneity have been determined, adjustments are applied to remove the heterogeneities introduced into the mean. This is done by comparing the record at the base station, for which the normal is desired, to the record at a supplementary station with a homogeneous period which covers the heterogeneous period at the base station. The difference method is applied to the

monthly average maximum and minimum temperatures and the ratio method to the monthly total precipitation. A weighted average of the various partial means of the adjusted and unadjusted record is then prepared to give the normal. Brief discussions of the methods of adjustment are found in [3] (p. 49, section 4.24).

Normal heating degree days are derived by the method described in [5].

Normals for Substations and Divisions

Normals for substations were computed somewhat differently than those for first-order stations. Monthly substation normals are the simple arithmetic averages of the monthly values of temperature and precipitation for the period 1931-1960. These were computed for only those substations that were active during the entire period and no attempt was made to adjust for minor changes in location of the observing site, or for changes in the time of observation. Normals were not computed for substations that were moved a significant distance during the 1931-1960 period. Missing values in the data series were estimated by methods described in [6]. Substations whose locations were essentially unchanged during the 1931-1960 period are identified in the tables.

Monthly divisional normals are the means of the monthly divisional averages of temperature and precipitation for the period 1931-1960. In calculating the monthly divisional averages, all of the stations in the division that furnished both temperature and precipitation data during the particular month were used. The averages therefore were obtained from a variable station sample. As a result, the divisional normals often differ from the averages of the normals for stations in the division.

Annual substation and divisional normals are the averages of the 12 monthly temperature normals and the sums of the 12 monthly precipitation normals.

References

1. U. S. Weather Bureau, "History of Climatological Publications," Key to Meteorological Records Documentation No. 4.1, Washington, D. C., 1958.
2. H. E. Landsberg, "The Decennial United States Census of Climate 1960 and Its Antecedents," Key to Meteorological Records Documentation No. 6.2, U. S. Weather Bureau, Washington, D. C., 1960.
3. U. S. Weather Bureau, Climatology at Work, Gerald L. Barger, ed., Washington, D. C., 1960.
4. H. C. S. Thom, "Tests of Significance for Temperature and Precipitation Normals," U. S. Weather Bureau Manuscript, 1961.
5. H. C. S. Thom, "The Rational Relationship Between Heating Degree Days and Temperature," Monthly Weather Review, Vol. 82, No. 1, January 1954.
6. U. S. Weather Bureau, Administrative Manual, Vol. III, Chap. C-05, paras. C-0509 and C-0510.

NOTES

1. Station Names

In Table I, "AP" after the city name indicates "airport station." "CO" indicates "city office station." Figures and letters following the station name indicate a rural location, and refer to the distance and direction of the station from the nearest post office.

indicates a station whose location has been essentially unchanged during the period 1931-1960.

H indicates the ground elevation of the station in feet above sea level, as of December 31, 1960.

G indicates the elevation at hygrothermometer site (where different from "H").

T indicates the height of the thermometer in feet above the ground as of December 31, 1960.

/NO TEST/ indicates that significant difference tests were not made.

2. Table Content

* indicates that the departure of the 1951-60 record from the 1921-50 normal is statistically significant, but through the adjustments for changes in location and exposure the absolute difference between old and new normals may even in these cases be very small.

T in the data tables indicates a monthly precipitation amount of only a trace.

February monthly normals are for a 28-day month.

TABLE I - NORMALS FOR FIRST ORDER STATIONS

VIRGINIA

STATION	JAN.	FEB.	MAR.	APR.	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG.	SEPT.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.	ANNUAL
CAPE HENRY CO H 16 T 6	49.3	49.5	55.5	64.9*	73.8	81.7	85.2*	83.9*	78.8	69.3	59.7	50.8	66.9
MAX TEMP	35.8	35.2	40.3	48.9*	58.4*	67.2	71.0*	71.0*	67.3	57.0	46.2	37.5	53.0
MIN TEMP	29.0	29.5	35.3	44.0*	53.7	62.1	65.9	64.9	58.2	47.4	39.9	29.9	46.5
Avg TEMP	42.6	42.4	47.9	56.9*	66.1*	74.5	78.1*	77.5*	73.1	63.2	53.0	44.2	60.0
DEG DAYS	694	633	536	246*	53*	0	0	0	0	112	360	645	3279
PRECIP	2.98	3.25	3.36	2.93*	3.04	3.54	5.00	5.36*	3.95	2.87*	2.80	2.76	41.84
LYNCHBURG AP H 947 T 5	46.2	48.3	55.7	67.5*	76.8	83.8	86.6*	84.7	79.1	69.0	57.1	47.0	66.8
MAX TEMP	32.2	32.2	38.7	47.9*	57.0*	62.1	65.9	64.9	58.2	47.4	39.9	29.9	46.5
MIN TEMP	37.6	38.9	45.5	56.2*	65.3	73.0	76.3*	74.8	68.7	58.2	47.0	38.5	56.7
Avg TEMP	41.2	41.6	48.0	58.0*	67.5*	75.6	78.0*	77.4	72.6	62.6*	51.4	42.5	59.7
DEG DAYS	738	655	533	216*	267*	0	0	0	51	223	540	822	4166
PRECIP	3.29*	2.65*	3.61	3.14	3.21	4.06	4.21	4.41	3.36	2.64	2.58	3.14	40.30
NORFOLK AP H 26 T 5	50.2	51.0	57.2	68.0*	77.3*	84.9	87.9*	86.2*	80.9	70.9	61.0	51.6	68.9
MAX TEMP	32.2	32.2	38.7	47.9*	57.0*	66.3	69.6*	68.8*	64.3	53.1*	41.8	33.1	50.5
MIN TEMP	38.7	39.9	46.7	57.1*	66.6*	74.6	78.0*	76.9*	70.3	59.2	48.5	37.7	58.0
Avg TEMP	41.2	41.6	48.0	58.0*	67.5*	75.6	78.0*	77.4	72.6	62.6*	51.4	42.5	59.7
DEG DAYS	738	655	533	216*	267*	0	0	0	0	136*	408	698	3421
PRECIP	3.33	3.21	3.45	3.16	3.36	3.61*	5.92*	5.97	4.22	2.92*	3.05	2.74	44.94
RICHMOND AP H 162 T 5	48.3	50.6	58.1	69.6*	78.3	85.8	88.4*	86.5	80.8	70.6	59.9	49.8	68.9
MAX TEMP	29.0	29.2	35.3	44.8*	54.6	63.4	67.7*	66.4*	59.6	47.7	37.1	29.5	47.0
MIN TEMP	38.7	39.9	46.7	57.1*	66.6*	74.6	78.0*	76.9*	70.3	59.2	48.5	37.7	58.0
Avg TEMP	41.2	41.6	48.0	58.0*	67.5*	75.6	78.0*	77.4	72.6	62.6*	51.4	42.5	59.7
DEG DAYS	815	703	577	246*	267*	0	0	0	36	222	495	784	3934
PRECIP	3.46*	2.90	3.42	3.15	3.72	3.75	5.61	5.54	3.65	3.00*	3.04*	2.97	44.21
ROANOKE AP H1174 T 23	47.0	49.1	56.2	68.2*	78.0*	85.4	88.0*	86.6*	80.7	70.0	57.3	47.5	67.8
MAX TEMP	28.1	29.3	34.8	44.6*	53.4*	61.3	65.2*	64.4*	57.9	46.3*	36.0	25.9	45.9
MIN TEMP	38.1	39.2	42.5	56.4*	65.7*	73.4	76.0*	75.4*	69.1	59.5	48.7	38.4	56.9
Avg TEMP	41.5	41.6	48.0	58.0*	67.5*	75.6	78.0*	77.4	72.6	62.6*	51	229	49
DEG DAYS	834	722	614	261*	267*	0	0	0	51	229	49	825	4150
PRECIP	3.12*	2.86*	3.53	3.10	3.79	3.80	4.25*	4.63	3.26	3.21	2.70	2.98	41.23
WASHINGTON AP H 14 T 4	44.3	46.1*	53.8	65.8*	75.5	83.4	87.0*	85.6*	78.6	68.3	56.5	45.6	65.8
MAX TEMP	29.5	29.4	35.8	45.6*	56.0*	64.9	69.3*	67.9*	60.7	49.6	38.9	30.5	48.2
MIN TEMP	34.9	37.8*	44.8	55.7*	65.2*	74.2	78.2*	76.5*	69.7	59.0	47.7	38.1	57.0
Avg TEMP	41.7	42.6	48.8	58.0*	67.5*	75.6	78.0*	77.4	72.6	62.6*	51.9	42.4	59.7
DEG DAYS	871	762*	656	286*	292*	0	0	0	33	217	519	834	4224
PRECIP	3.03*	2.47	3.21*	3.15	4.14	3.21	4.15	4.90	3.83*	3.07	2.84	2.78	40.78

TABLE II - NORMALS BY CLIMATOLOGICAL DIVISIONS

TEMPERATURE (°F)

PRECIPITATION (In.)

VIRGINIA

1963 REVISIONS AND ADDITIONS TO
CLIMATOGRAPHY OF THE UNITED STATES NO. 81-38
VIRGINIA

TABLE I — NORMALS FOR FIRST ORDER STATIONS

STATION	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Annual
RICHMOND AP G 162 T 5													
MAX TEMP	48.3	50.6	59.1	70.4	79.3	86.8	89.4	86.5	81.8	70.6	59.9	49.8	69.4
MIN TEMP	29.0	29.2	36.3	45.8	54.6	63.4	66.7	65.4	58.6	46.7	37.1	29.5	46.9
AVG TEMP	38.7	39.9	47.7	58.1	67.0	75.1	78.1	76.0	70.2	58.7	48.5	39.7	58.1
DEG DAYS	815	703	546	219	53	0	0	0	36	214	495	784	3865

TABLE II — NORMALS BY CLIMATOLOGICAL DIVISIONS													
PRECIPITATION (In.)													
CENTRAL MOUNTAIN DIVISION													2.83 40.42
SOUTHWESTERN MOUNTAIN DIV													3.27 43.43

REVISIONS TO FIRST ORDER STATIONS IN TABLE I AFFECT THE SAME STATIONS IN TABLE II.

USCOMM-WB-Asheville, N. C. -3/31/64- 2000

